

Public Awareness Subcommittee

Monday, September 17, 2007
1:00 p.m.
Blatt Building, Room 201

A G E N D A

- I. Welcome
Mr. Mike Brennan
- II. Approval of Minutes – May 21, 2007 (Action)
- III. PAIRS Update (Information)
Dana Yow
- IV. Community Collaborations (for Discussion)
Dana Yow
- V. Report Card Web Search (Information)
Dana Yow
- VI. Other Business

Subcommittee Members

Mike Brennan, Chair
Bob Daniel
Thomas DeLoach
Mike Fair
Alex Martin
Neil Robinson
Harold Stowe

Harold C. Stowe
CHAIRMAN

Alex Martin
VICE CHAIRMAN

Michael R. Brennan

Bill Cotty

Robert C. Daniel

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Barbara B. Hairfield

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Joseph H. Neal

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Neil C. Robinson, Jr.

Robert E. Walker

Kent M. Williams

Kristi V. Woodall

Jo Anne Anderson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Public Awareness Subcommittee

Minutes of the Meeting

May 21, 2007

Subcommittee Members Present: Alex Martin, Mike Fair, and Harold Stowe

Staff Present: Dr. Jo Anne Anderson, Dana Yow, and Melanie Barton

Guest Present: Debbie Elmore, Communications Director, SC School Boards Association

I. Welcome

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes – March 19, 2007 (Action Item)

The minutes of the March 19, 2007, meeting were approved as submitted.

III. Realizing Impact: EOC Communications Plan, 2007-2008 (Information)

Ms. Yow presented the EOC Communications Plan to the subcommittee. The plan, designed to complement the mission of the EOC and further refine public awareness activities, will coincide with the start of the new fiscal year if approved. Ms. Yow outlined strategies and tactics associated with three main objectives:

1. Advocate for the utilization of data published on the annual school and district report cards to be used as tools for improvement.
2. Increase urgent public, parent, and community involvement in support of higher student, school, and system achievement.
3. Enhance understanding and impact of the accountability system by focusing on the 2010 goal.

The committee discussed the plan and approved it.

IV. PAIRS Update

Ms. Yow updated the members on the 2007 Summer Reading Supplement, an annual project of PAIRS. This year's supplement is being published in six daily newspapers in May.

V. Results of the 2006 Parent Survey Responses

Ms. Barton presented the results of the 2006 Parent Survey to subcommittee members. The members discussed. An issue of "At a Glance" is planned to provide a synopsis of the report.

VI. "Be There" Parental Involvement Campaign

Ms. Yow and Ms. Elmore informed the committee about a media campaign called "Be There." The committee discussed the information but at the request of Dr. Anderson, held off on action until further information could be obtained.

VII. Other Business

Ms. Yow updated the committee on the "Voices" publication, which was sent out following the Common Ground county tour. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Public Awareness Subcommittee

Date: September 17, 2007

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION

Provide an update of the the work of Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS), from February 2007 to September 2007.

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

The preamble to the EAA, calls for the "acceptance of the responsibility for improving student performance and taking actions to improve classroom practice and school performance by the Governor, the General Assembly, the State Department of Education, colleges and universities, local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community" (Section 59-18-100).

CRITICAL FACTS

As part of the EOC's objective to strengthen the teaching of reading, Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS) began in February 2005. PAIRS is designed to provide the catalyst to encourage and support the achievement of grade level reading literacy for every child in South Carolina.

The following report summarizes the work of the initiative from February 2007 to September 2007, organized around the purposes outlined in the bylaws.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

Ongoing

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Cost:

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

☐ For approval

☒ For information

ACTION TAKEN

☐ Approved

☐ Amended

☐ Not Approved

☐ Action deferred (explain)

Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS) Success Update

Submitted to Public Awareness Subcommittee, September 2007

Overview

Launched in February 2005, Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS) is a project of SC's daily newspapers and is administered as a public awareness initiative of the SC Education Oversight Committee.

The mission of PAIRS is to encourage and support the achievement of reading literacy on grade level for every child in South Carolina. With an intense focus on grades three through eight, the initiative seeks to energize broad collaboration and involvement in local communities (ie., extended learning opportunities, mentoring programs, faith-based programs, literacy initiatives, etc.)

As outlined in the initiative's bylaws (Appendix A), the guiding principles of PAIRS follow:

- Reading is essential for success in school and life.
- Young people learn best when nurturing, caring adults provide motivation and support.
- The future of all South Carolinians depends on our ability to help our students reach their potential.

The purposes are

1. to identify and recruit affiliate organizations promoting reading and literacy among adults and young people;
2. to facilitate connections between affiliate organizations, providing them support to enhance their individual missions;
3. to promote opportunities that support the creation of new reading programs;
4. to develop communication, marketing, and research materials; and
5. to support activities involving reading and literacy statewide.

The initiative emerged as a result of "Conversations with the EOC" in every county of South Carolina, held from September 2003-April 2004. These meetings identified a critical need for all citizens to actively reinforce and support the mission of schools, particularly in the area of reading. The three areas of identified consensus formed the guiding principles of the initiative, which are listed above.

The need for PAIRS was reinforced in 2005 when research showed an almost one-to-one correlation between reading proficiency and on-time high school graduation. South Carolina ranks last among states in graduation rates, graduating only 48 percent of 9th graders in four years.¹

In 2004, only 27 percent of 5th graders and 25 percent of 7th graders scored Proficient on the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT), meaning they are well-prepared for work at the next grade level. Many of these students do not acquire the reading skills they need to prepare

¹ The high school graduation variable was defined as the percent of the 1999-2000 9th grade 135 ADM who received diplomas (does not include those receiving certificates) three years later in 2002-2003.
http://www.scpairs.org/PDF/Harry_Miley_Exec_Summary.pdf.

them for graduation and beyond. The research suggests that only half of those in the ninth grade today will ever graduate from high school.

The study also showed that for every ten additional students we can help to reach reading proficiency on the PACT, at least eight will graduate. A large part of a student's success in the classroom depends on their contact with adults who encourage and inspire them to read outside of the classroom. Providing a catalyst by which greater awareness is placed on literacy and the importance of adult/child relationships is at the heart of the PAIRS initiative.

Update to PAIRS Two-Year Status Report

In February 2007, the EOC approved the submission of the *PAIRS Two-Year Status Report*. The report summarized two years of work of the initiative. It was organized around the purposes outlined in the bylaws and also outlined future directions for the initiative. The following report updates the committee on the progress of the initiative from February 2007 to September 2007.

Purpose 1: to identify and recruit affiliate organizations promoting reading and literacy among adults and young people.

Affiliate membership in PAIRS is open to not-for-profit programs and individuals who concur with the mission and goals of PAIRS and act to implement the mission and goals. Programs and individuals who meet criteria are open to join PAIRS as Affiliate members. The cost of membership is free and EOC/PAIRS staff keeps signed commitment statements on file.

Currently, there are 103 PAIRS Affiliates, an increase of seven programs since February. Fifty-eight affiliates are programs and 45 are individual members. Currently, 22 counties have met the stated goal, which is to have two affiliates in each county. In February, 20 counties had met the goal. A breakdown of the affiliates by county is attached in Appendix B.

The Advisory Board, which advises and supports PAIRS implementation statewide and in local communities, is composed of 16 individuals, who represent the publishers of the 16 daily newspapers. These individuals meet quarterly. Current advisory board members are: Steven Brandt, *Greenville News*; Henry Haitz, *The State*; Anthony Summerlin, *Union Daily Times*; Valerie Canepa, *Rock Hill Herald*; Milton Miles, *The Sun News*; Kim Buckner-Land, *Spartanburg Herald-Journal*; William Collins, *Greenwood Index-Journal*; Larry Tarleton, *Charleston Post and Courier*; Cathy Hughes, *Orangeburg Times and Democrat*; Joni Weerheim, *Seneca Daily Journal*; Fred Foster, *Anderson Independent-Mail*; Jack Osteen, *Sumter Item*; and Scott Hunter, *Aiken Standard*. Mark Laskowski, Publisher of the *Florence Morning News*, and Beth Patton, Marketing Director at the *Island Packet/ Beaufort Gazette*, have recently joined the Advisory Board. In June, the *Bluffton Today* newspaper began daily publication; PAIRS staff is working to recruit Larry G. Miller, Publisher of the two-year old paper, to join the advisory board.

Purpose 2: to facilitate connections between affiliate organizations, providing them support to enhance their individual missions.

Connections and partnerships continue to be critical to the success of PAIRS. Partnership in PAIRS is open to organizations with a commitment to literacy and with whom a formalized relationship would benefit PAIRS Affiliate programs, or organizations with similar or overlapping services.

Current, active partners include the SC Afterschool Alliance, Harvest Hope Food Bank, SC Center for Children's Books and Literacy, University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science, SC State Library, Allen University, and the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, SC 7th Episcopal District.

The South Carolina Center for Children's Books and Literacy (SCCCBL) is an outreach program of the *University of SC School of Library and Information Science*. It is designed to enhance existing literacy programs, provide literacy research specific to South Carolina, and train teachers and daycare workers, parents and others. Recently, a letter (Appendix C) was sent out to the leaders of all Rotary Clubs around the state, offering a program with a message from PAIRS staff and the staff of the SC Center for Children's Books and Literacy. Literacy is a key component of the mission of Rotary International and as outlined in the invitation to rotaries, the program has three main objectives: 1.) provide information on the relationship between literacy and success in school, life, and economic development; 2.) instill a sense of urgency about the importance of literacy at each stage of a child's life; and 3.) challenge Rotarians as individuals and as an organization to utilize their influence and resources to act and assist the students of South Carolina.

The partnership with PAIRS with *Allen University* and the *SC 7th Episcopal District of the AME Church* on the *Allen Reading Initiative* is not currently in operation. Dr. Wanda Fernandopulle, the Director of the Initiative, resigned from Allen in November 2006, and since that time the school has not been involved in the support of the 14 AME churches involved in the initiative's pilot. The programs continue to be supported as PAIRS Affiliate programs, receiving resources related to the literacy component of their programs.

Although staff of the daily newspapers compose the Advisory Board of the initiative, they also partner and provide to the affiliate programs. For example, PAIRS Affiliate programs have benefited from free class subscriptions to *The State* paper on two occasions. *The State's* Newspapers in Education (NIE) program offers class sets of newspapers to public school classrooms to be used for educational purposes. They have recently seen the benefit of offering these resources to out-of-school time programs. NIE staff have also offered to provide free training to affiliate staff on using the newspaper as a learning tool for all grade levels.

Purpose 3: To promote opportunities that support the creation of new reading programs.

In October 2005, the publication *How to Start an Effective Out-of-School-Time Program in South Carolina* was published as a project of PAIRS and the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance (SCAA). The guide is an excellent resource for individuals wanting to start a program or enhance an existing program. Literacy resources are included within the guide. Since publication of the guide, PAIRS staff has tried to develop training to accompany it with staff of the SC Afterschool Alliance. Lack of staff at the SCAA has consistently presented a barrier in keeping the trainings from occurring. In September 2007, the SCAA will double their staff by adding two staff persons to serve as regional coordinators.

Purpose 4: To develop communication, marketing, and research materials.

In addition to the aforementioned program with the SC Center for Children's Books and Literacy, PAIRS staff has continued the publication of the quarterly *Connections* newsletter.

In May, PAIRS staff began a moderated listserv for affiliates to communicate with one another. The listserv is hosted by the SC Chief Information Office (CIO) and can be accessed online at the PAIRS website, www.SCPAIRS.org.

Staff from PAIRS and the SC Afterschool Alliance (SCAA) are also working collaboratively to bring *Afterschool Academies* to South Carolina this year and offer it to PAIRS Affiliates and individuals within the SCAA network. The *Academies* program offer programming and practice in the core approaches and methods of effective extended learning time education. Funding is provided by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

Staff is also working with partners on the potential of using ETV resources to offer literacy related professional development to PAIRS Affiliates online. Out-of-school time program staff and child care providers often do not have the time to attend workshops during the week or weekends – these types of “accessible-anytime” activities would be beneficial to providers.

Purpose 5: To support activities involving reading and literacy statewide.

In May 2007, a follow-up to the successful “Summer Reading” supplement pilot was published. The goal of the supplement was to showcase the power of great books, particularly during the summer months, and to reach students and adults in the community who interact with students.

This year’s supplement was published in six daily newspapers: *Florence Morning News*, *Myrtle Beach Sun News*, *Orangeburg Times and Democrat*, *Seneca Daily Journal*, *Union Daily Times*, and *Spartanburg Herald-Journal*.

Details of the distribution of the supplement include:

- 228,000 total copies of the “Summer Reading” inserts were printed. Total circulation in the daily newspapers was 189,881.
- The EOC investment was identical to the investment made in the 2006 pilot project. Each of the six participating newspapers printed their own supplement at their own print shops and invested money in the production of the project. *The Florence Morning News* handled the printing and distribution of the overrun copies.
- 300 copies of the “Summer Reading” inserts were distributed to school district offices statewide, for use in summer school. Each shipment contained an order form so that districts needing additional copies could order directly from *The Florence Morning News*.
- Each of the PAIRS Affiliates received 50 copies of the “Summer Reading” insert.
- 50 Summer Reading sections were delivered to every public library in the state.
- 5,000 additional copies of the supplement were printed for additional requests.
- A teacher’s guide to the supplement was provided free of charge to educators upon request.

This fall, PAIRS staff will work with representatives from the SC State Library, University of SC School of Library and Information Science, and Newspapers in Education (NIE) staff from around the state to consider partnering and increasing the effectiveness of this project in 2008.

Appendixes

Appendix A

By-Laws of Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS)

Article I: Name

The name of the organization is Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success, hereafter referred to as "PAIRS".

Article II: Mission and Purpose

The mission of PAIRS is to encourage and support the achievement of reading literacy on grade level, with an intense focus on grades three through eight for every child in South Carolina by energizing broad collaboration and involvement in local communities (ie., extended learning opportunities, mentoring programs, literacy initiatives, etc.)

The guiding principles of PAIRS shall be:

- Reading is essential for success in school and life.
- Young people learn best when nurturing, caring adults provide motivation and support.
- The future of all South Carolinians depends on our ability to help our students reach their potential.

The purposes of PAIRS shall be:

1. to identify and recruit affiliate organizations promoting reading and literacy among adults and young people;
2. to facilitate connections between affiliate organizations, providing them support to enhance their individual missions;
3. to promote opportunities that support the creation of new reading programs;
4. to develop communication, marketing, and research materials; and
5. to support activities involving reading and literacy statewide.

Article III: Advisory Board

Section 1: The Advisory Board shall consist of one elected chair, as well as appointed members as described in Article III. The Chair will be elected annually among board members at the last board member of the calendar year.

Section 2: The Advisory Board shall advise and support PAIRS implementation statewide and in local communities.

No member of the PAIRS Advisory Board, or newspapers, shall derive any personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her participation with PAIRS. Each individual shall disclose to the PAIRS Advisory Board any personal interest which he or she may have in any matter pending before the PAIRS Advisory Board and shall refrain from participation in any decision on such matter.

Section 3: The PAIRS Board should be composed of the Publishers of South Carolina's daily newspapers.

Section 4: The Advisory Board shall advance the purpose of PAIRS directly or through its designees.

Section 5: The PAIRS Advisory Board shall meet at least twice a year, in person or by way of telephone conference.

Section 6: Bylaws may be amended at any board meeting by a majority of those present.

Article IV: Organization

Section 1: PAIRS is administered by the SC Education Oversight Committee (EOC).

Section 2: An appointed Advisory Board shall advise and support PAIRS implementation statewide and in local communities.

The PAIRS Advisory Board is composed of the Publisher from each of the daily newspapers in South Carolina. If the Publisher is not able to participate, a senior staff member shall be designated.

Section 3: The street address of PAIRS is: 1105 Pendleton Street, Blatt Building, Suite 227, Columbia, SC 29211

Article V: Affiliates and Partners

Section 1. *Affiliate Membership* in PAIRS shall be open to not-for-profit programs that concur with the mission and goals of PAIRS and act to implement the mission and goals.

PAIRS Affiliate members must pledge that their represented group does not discriminate based on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or handicap in its practices related to employment or establishment and administration of its programs and initiatives.

Affiliate Meetings. There shall be one General Membership Meeting (e.g., PAIRS Summit) per year, at the time, place, and discretion of the Advisory Board.

- Section 2.** *Partnership in PAIRS* is open to organizations:
1. with a commitment to literacy and with whom a formalized relationship would benefit PAIRS Affiliate Programs (e.g., Allen University, USC);
 2. with similar or overlapping services (e.g., SC Afterschool Alliance)

- Section 3.** *Associate Status* in PAIRS is open to organizations:
1. with services or products which would benefit PAIRS Affiliates.

Participation does not constitute an endorsement by PAIRS. The PAIRS Advisory Board must approve all partnerships and requests for Associate Status.

Current dated 6/20/05

Appendix B

County	No. Affiliates	No. Individual Affiliates	Met Goal	
Abbeville	0	0	N	
Aiken	1	0	N	
Allendale	0	0	N	
Anderson	0	0	N	
Bamberg	0	0	N	
Barnwell	1	1	Y	
Beaufort	3	3	Y	
Berkeley	0	0	N	
Calhoun	1	0	N	
Charleston	3	2	Y	
Cherokee	0	0	N	
Chester	0	0	N	
Chesterfield	0	0	N	
Clarendon	3	3	Y	
Colleton	1	1	Y	
Darlington	0	0	N	
Dillon	2	2	Y	
Dorchester	1	1	Y	
Edgefield	0	0	N	
Fairfield	0	0	N	
Florence	1	12	Y	
Georgetown	3	1	Y	Total # of Affiliates: 58
Greenville	10	0	Y	Total # of Individual Affil: 45
Greenwood	2	0	Y	
Hampton	0	0	N	Total: 103
Horry	0	0	N	
Jasper	2	5	Y	Counties Met Goal: 22
Kershaw	2	0	N	Counties Not Met Goal: 24
Lancaster	0	0	N	
Laurens	0	0	N	
Lee	0	0	N	
Lexington	3	2	Y	
Marion	2	2	Y	
Marlboro	0	0	N	
McCormick	0	0	N	
Newberry	0	0	N	
Oconee	0	0	N	
Orangeburg	1	1	Y	
Pickens	1	0	N	
Richland	10	6	Y	
Saluda	0	0	N	
Spartanburg	1	1	Y	
Sumter	2	1	Y	
Union	0	0	N	
Williamsburg	2	1	Y	
York	0	0	N	

current 12/18/06

Appendix C

August 3, 2007

Name
Rotary Club
Address 1
Address 2
City, State, Zip

Dear Salutation:

How can we assist young people today reach their full potential and become successful members of society? As a Rotarian, you understand the importance of bringing clarity and understanding to this question and how community volunteerism fits into the answer.

The leadership of Rotary International has consistently recognized literacy as a critical component to individual success. A call to action is necessary in our state. Unfortunately, fewer students graduate on-time in our state than in any other state in the nation. Many South Carolina students are not reading at the level necessary to complete high school, to be successful in school and life -- and to experience the enjoyment of being life-long readers and learners.

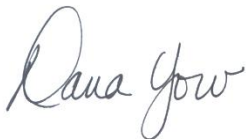
Research studies document a correlation between reading proficiency and on-time graduation. Student success is higher when out-of-school activities reinforce and extend learning acquired in school. South Carolina's young people need reinforcement in reading initially and critically as they encounter more demanding material.

Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS), a public awareness initiative of the SC Education Oversight Committee, directed by the publishers of South Carolina's 16 daily newspapers, and the South Carolina Center for Children's Books and Literacy at the University of South Carolina, have a message we would like to share with Rotary groups around the state. Our 20-minute presentation has three objectives:

- (a) Provide information on the relationship between literacy and success in school, life and economic development;
- (b) Instill a sense of urgency about the importance of literacy at each stage of a child's life; and
- (c) Challenge you as an individual and as an organization to utilize your influence and resources to act and assist the students of South Carolina.

Please contact one of us if your group is able to work us into your program schedule. Our contact information is listed below under our signatures.

Sincerely,



Dana Yow
Director of Communications
Education Oversight Committee / PAIRS
Phone: 803-734-6164
Danay@eoc.sc.gov
Ellen Shuler



Executive Director
SC Center for Children's Books and Literacy
Phone: 803-734-8207
shulere@gwm.sc.edu

Launched in February 2005, *Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS)* is a project of SC's daily newspapers and is administered as a public awareness initiative of the SC Education Oversight Committee. The mission of PAIRS is to encourage and support the achievement of reading literacy on grade level for every child in South Carolina. With an intense focus on grades three through eight, the initiative seeks to energize broad collaboration and involvement in local communities (ie., extended learning opportunities, mentoring programs, faith-based programs, literacy initiatives, etc.)

The South Carolina Center for Children's Books and Literacy (SCCCBL) is an outreach program of the *University of SC School of Library and Information Science*. It is designed to enhance existing literacy programs, provide literacy research specific to South Carolina, and train teachers and daycare workers, parents and others.

The *SC Education Oversight Committee* is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business persons, and elected leaders who are appointed by the General Assembly. Created in 1998, the committee is dedicated to reporting facts, measuring change, and promoting progress within South Carolina's education system.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Public Awareness Subcommittee

Date: September 17, 2007

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation to the Public Awareness Subcommittee: The Education Oversight Committee will increase partnerships among those who invest in South Carolina's schools by providing information for and connections among those building community infrastructure in support of higher student achievement.

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

The preamble to the Education Accountability Act of 1998 (EAA), calls for the "acceptance of the responsibility for improving student performance and taking actions to improve classroom practice and school performance by the Governor, the General Assembly, the State Department of Education, colleges and universities, local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community" (§59-18-100).

The EAA (§59-18-1700) also establishes a public information campaign and a committee to oversee the development of the campaign:

An on going public information campaign must be established to apprise the public of the status of the public schools and the importance of high standards for academic performance for the public school students of South Carolina. A special committee shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Education Oversight Committee to include two committee members representing business and two representing education and others representing business, industry, and education. The committee shall plan and oversee the development of a campaign, including public service announcements for the media and other such avenues as deemed appropriate for informing the public.

CRITICAL FACTS

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

2007-2008

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Cost:

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

☒ **For approval**

☐ **For information**

ACTION TAKEN

☐ **Approved**

☐ **Not Approved**

☐ **Amended**

☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

Community Engagement Brief

DRAFT Submitted to the EOC Public Awareness Subcommittee – September 17, 2007

Introduction

As outlined in the agency's mission, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is committed to positively influencing education in South Carolina by affecting dramatic, continuous improvement of the state's educational system. The work of the committee is only effective when it is communicated widely, clearly, and efficiently to a variety of audiences.

A belief in broad-based inclusion and collaboration remains one of the core values underlying the mission of the committee. Comprehensive, community-building initiatives are often included as tactics to address committee objectives. These initiatives typically include face-to-face interaction with a variety of audiences.

The following brief reviews the statutes related to the EOC's role in public awareness and specific objectives adopted by the committee that relate to community engagement. The brief also outlines past EOC community engagement activities and includes a list of current agencies and groups who are involved in related activities of which we are aware.

Statutory Provisions

The preamble to the Education Accountability Act of 1998 (EAA), calls for the "acceptance of the responsibility for improving student performance and taking actions to improve classroom practice and school performance by the Governor, the General Assembly, the State Department of Education, colleges and universities, local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community" (§59-18-100).

The EAA (§59-18-1700) also establishes a public information campaign and a committee to oversee the development of the campaign:

An on-going public information campaign must be established to apprise the public of the status of the public schools and the importance of high standards for academic performance for the public school students of South Carolina. A special committee shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Education Oversight Committee to include two committee members representing business and two representing education and others representing business, industry, and education. The committee shall plan and oversee the development of a campaign, including public service announcements for the media and other such avenues as deemed appropriate for informing the public.

EOC Objectives / Communications Plan

The EOC organizes its work annually to contribute to and stimulate continued progress. The following adopted objectives apply to public engagement and community involvement:

- Implement a proactive public relations effort and provide information on all EAA issues through education and encouragement (*adopted 1999-2000*)
- Serve as a catalyst and form study teams on a) improving local leadership quality and engagement and b) the utilization of resources, specifically the utilization of educators, facilities, and time to meet the 2010 Goal. (*adopted 1999-2000*)
- Persuade others to work toward our shared vision, including the promotion of a common agenda, with the Governor and State Superintendent, as well as developing a strong relationship with the minority community. (*adopted 2000-2001*)
- Continue to implement a proactive public relations effort and provide information on all EAA issues through education and engagement (*adopted 2000-2001*)
- Continue to implement a proactive public relations effort to develop broad support for educational achievements and to provide information on all EAA issues through education and engagement. (*adopted 2001-2002*)

- Extend parental and community involvement efforts to support young people as they progress through school, particularly at transitions between school levels. (*adopted 2004-2005, 2005-2006*)
- Prepare educators and communities to work with the system of increasing rigor (*adopted 2005-2006*)
- Develop and distribute public-friendly reporting materials on the achievement of the [2010] goal to increase visibility (*adopted 2005-2006*)
- Communicate the priorities developed through the long-range Common Ground planning process and work with local and state officials and citizens to implement the priorities. (*adopted 2005-2006*)
- Publish EOC recommendations in high visibility materials and communicate the urgency of actions to elevate student and school achievement (*adopted 2005-2006*)
- Build alliances for higher performance: Engage the public in their individual, civic and professional lives to support actions so that every student achieves at high levels (*adopted 2005-2006*)
- Increase partnerships among those who invest in SC schools by:
 - Continuing to receive broad input, communicate and implement the Common Ground commitment
 - Convening informal meetings among the Governor, the State Superintendent of Education, the leadership of the legislative education committees, the State Board of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, the South Carolina Technical College System and First Steps;
 - Continuing to employ formal and informal advisory groups representing parents, educators and business and civic leaders, and
 - Collaborating with informal education providers to encourage extended learning programs sponsored by civic, community and faith-based groups. (*adopted 2006-2007*)
- Increase the impact of communications to focus attention on achievement of the 2010 goal and heighten awareness of the value of educational achievement for all South Carolinians. (*adopted 2006-2007*)

Furthermore, the EOC adopted *Realizing Impact: EOC Communications Plan, 2007-2008*, in June 2007. The plan further details the communications work of the committee and outlines three main objectives which are aligned with the goals and objectives of the EOC. The adopted objectives are:

1. Advocate for the utilization of data published on the annual school and district report cards to be used as tools for improvement.
2. Increase urgent public, parent, and community involvement in support of higher student, school, and system achievement.
3. Enhance understanding and impact of the accountability system by focusing on the 2010 goal.

Chronology of EOC Work

Statewide County Meetings, 2000-2001 – Report Cards

In 2000-2001, EOC members and staff conducted county meetings in each of South Carolina's 46 counties. The workshops, "Improving Education in South Carolina: How the School and District Report Cards Can Help," were designed to stress the importance of using report cards as tools for improvement. The workshops were held just prior to the release of the first school and district report cards.

Statewide County Meetings, 2003 – The 2010 Goal

In 2003, the EOC went on the road again to talk about the 2010 Goal, stressing the urgency of the goal and listening to individuals about concerns and critical barriers they've identified in reaching the goal. Meetings were scheduled in each county but this time, committee members visited with existing groups and organizations (i.e., Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, chamber of commerce meetings, editorial board meetings with local newspapers.) These meetings identified

a critical need for all citizens to actively reinforce and support the mission of schools, particularly in the area of reading. Consequently, the EOC began a public awareness initiative known as Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS).

Study Circles (2003)

After a successful second tour of all South Carolina counties in 2003, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) partnered with the South Carolina School Boards Association (SCSBA) and the South Carolina School Administrators Association (SCASA) to pilot a community planning process in three school districts—McCormick, York One and Florence One.

The Study Circles (SC) process and trained SC facilitators were used. Study Circles information is found at www.studycircles.org. A brief description is below:

The Study Circles Resource Center is a national organization that helps local communities develop their own ability to organize large-scale and diverse participation in dialogue structured to support and strengthen measurable community change. We work with neighborhoods, cities and towns, regions, and states, paying particular attention to the racial and ethnic dimensions of the problems they address. We have a proven track record of learning from communities to create innovative tools and processes. We provide advice and training, using what we learn to benefit other communities.

SCRC was created in 1989 by The Paul J. Aicher Foundation, a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization. Since 1989, we have worked with more than 550 communities across the United States on many different public issues.

In the early years, we focused on developing a better kind of public dialogue, drawing on the ways people talk in their everyday lives. Then, we championed the idea that public talk is for *everyone*, and helped communities organize to bring all kinds of people into the conversation. Now we're helping people connect public dialogue to real solutions

Superintendents in each of the school districts were motivated to participate by different factors. Dr. Lloyd Hunter in McCormick focused on the disparate communities in McCormick County. McCormick is home to many economically disadvantaged students but its taxpayer base is dominated by economically advantaged retirees. York School District One, led by Dr. Katie Brochu at the time, used the process to develop support for a bond referendum. In Florence One, Superintendent Joe Nelson used the process to address questions around race relations in the schools.

Over the course of one year, the EOC invested approximately 20 days of the Communications Directors' time, some printing and travel expenses and hosted an information seminar for superintendents. The EOC, along with staff from SCASA and the SCSBA, advised on demographics, offered assistance as study circle facilitators, and served as note takers.

Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS)

Launched in February 2005 following the second tour of counties, PAIRS is a project of South Carolina's daily newspapers and is administered as a public awareness initiative of the EOC. The mission of PAIRS is to encourage and support the achievement of reading literacy on grade level for every child in the state. The initiative seeks to energize broad collaboration and involvement in local communities (i.e., extended learning opportunities, mentoring programs, faith-based programs, literacy initiatives, etc.) The work of PAIRS is organized around five main purposes:

1. To identify and recruit affiliate organizations promoting reading and literacy among adults and young people.

2. To facilitate connections between affiliate organizations, providing them support to enhance their individual missions.
3. To promote opportunities that support the creation of new reading programs
4. To develop communication, marketing, and research materials.
5. To support activities involving reading and literacy statewide.

PAIRS-related activities include:

- publication of the annual “Summer Reading” supplement in daily newspapers
- publication of “Creating Quality Out-of-School Time Programs in South Carolina, the result of a partnership with the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance
- partnerships with the SC Center for Children’s Books and Literacy, USC School of Library and Information Science, SC State Library, Harvest Hope Food Bank
- hosted two affiliate summits for affiliate members
- provided resources designed to enhance the programs of approx. 100 affiliate programs

Allen Reading Initiative (2005-2006)

Launched in June 2005, the Allen Reading Initiative was a partnership between Parents and Adults Inspiring Reading Success (PAIRS) and Allen University / African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. The goal of the project was to develop a comprehensive training (the Allen Reading Initiative) within the more than 500 South Carolina AME churches, focused on enhancing reading skills for students. For many families, church is a second home and potentially, a place where children can receive adult attention and exposure to literacy. The initiative received positive support from Bishop Preston Warren Williams, III, the presiding Bishop leading the AME church in South Carolina.

With initial seed funding of \$22,811.00 (Phase I funding), Allen University established a campus office for the initiative and assigned a coordinator from within the university. Allen staff were to develop a training and implementation model. Phase I of the project focused on training representatives from 14 churches located in Columbia, Orangeburg, Spartanburg, Ridgeville, North Charleston, Cross, Summerton, Manning, Dillon, Marion, Hilton Head, Beaufort, Florence, and Mullins. Two full-day trainings were held for the churches at Allen University. ARI staff was to work with Phase I churches to build training teams and determine local support within communities. In late fall 2006, ARI staff coordinated a book drive on the Allen University campus, providing the pilot programs with age-appropriate books for their programs.

With the exception of the Allen-based trainings, ARI staff did not travel to the individual church sites. The coordinator cited a lack of time and support from the University as reasons for not completing this goal. Additionally, staff turnover was an issue from the start of the project. Three staff persons assigned to the project resigned from Allen University during the timeframe for the project. Several of the pilot programs are still functioning and supported as PAIRS Affiliate programs.

Statewide County Meetings, 2006-2007 – Common Ground

Most recently, the committee visited each county to introduce Common Ground, a unique, innovative approach to long-range planning that focuses the state on high achievement over a generational time period. The two-hour meetings in each county included opportunities for participants to share where common ground existed in their own communities, barriers to success, and individual and collective priorities. Several county meetings spawned community groups to “continue the conversations.”

Statewide Community Involvement Activities

SC State Dept. of Education – Office of Community and Parent Services

Former State Superintendent of Education Inez Tenenbaum established the Office of Parental and Community Partnerships in September 2000 in part as a result of the Parental Involvement in

Their Children's Education Act (SC Code 59-28-100). The act required the state superintendent to "designate a ... staff position whose specific role is to coordinate statewide initiatives to support school and district parental involvement." In July 2007, Dr. Jim Rex reorganized the office and re-named it the Office of Community and Parent Services. In addition to responsibilities with increasing parental and community partnerships, the office now houses the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, Character Education, the Commission on National Service and AmeriCorps, Parents As Teachers, and Parenting and Family Literacy Programs.

The mission of the Office of Community and Parent Services (OCPS) is to offer technical assistance and services to local schools and school districts as well as other civic and community groups in increasing parental, family and community involvement and partnerships.

Specific community engagement initiatives include:

- Liaison with Communities in Schools of South Carolina. Through a budget proviso, CIS-SC receives \$200,000 each year from the SDE. A portion of these funds allow the two agencies to share a community/parental involvement liaison to work with schools and districts to increase partnerships and with CIS-SC.
- District Parental Involvement Liaisons. All school districts have designated a parental involvement liaison. Written information and training is provided regularly. Technical assistance is given as requested.
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. In partnership with AARP-SC, the OCPS helps with support groups for the more than 51,000 adults who are raising school-age grandchildren. Informative symposiums for these grandparents are held each year. Four were held in October 2006. Four will be held in October 2007.
- National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University. The OCPS maintains agency membership in this group. The NNPS provides the office with information on best practices from across the country. The OCPS provides this to local district parental involvement liaisons. As of June 2007, South Carolina had four school districts and 38 schools as members of the NNPS. In July 2007, the State Superintendent agreed to pay the initial enrollment fee for any of the priority schools wishing to join the NNPS.
- The South Carolina Commission on National and Community Service (SCCNCS). The SCCNCS provides resources, including funds and training, to support local programs that wish to use service as a strategy to address challenges in South Carolina communities. Commission initiatives include AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, Palmetto Pride, Volunteerism, Palmetto Serves, and Community-Based Learn and Serve.
- South Carolina currently funds ten school districts with a Learn and Serve America formula grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The districts are developing replicable service-learning projects designed to increase student literacy levels, develop civic responsibility, and increase participation in service. Schools are developing partnerships with local agencies, businesses, and faith-based organizations to help sustain service-learning activities beyond the grant cycle.
- South Carolina is in the third year of funding for five school districts with a Learn and Serve America grant that includes school, community, and higher education partnerships. The districts have developed replicable service-learning projects designed to address community needs in partnership with a higher education institution, develop civic responsibility, and increase participation in service through activities aligned with the state academic content standards. Schools have developed partnerships with local agencies, businesses, and faith-based organizations to help sustain service-learning activities beyond the grant cycle.
- Character Education and Community Collaboration. The Character Education initiative of the South Carolina Department of Education (SDE) began with federal funding during the 1996-97 school year. This initiative has a broad base of support that includes the business community and numerous cities and communities of character throughout the state. One project, Teen LEAD, supports programs in 7 school districts that work to better prepare students for lives as citizens, employees, parents, and leaders.

EEDA Regional Education Centers (RECs)

The Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) calls for the EEDA Coordinating Council to designate Regional Education Centers (RECs) to coordinate and facilitate the delivery of information, resources, and services to students, educators, employers, and the community. The twelve regions – Catawba, Greenville, Lowcountry, Lower Savannah, Midlands, Pee Dee, Pendleton, Santee Lynches, Trident, Upper Savannah, Upstate, and Waccammaw, correspond with the districts designated in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

The RECs are not service providers, but rather service “brokers”, designed to coordinate various stakeholders in a region to ensure that needs are being met. A virtual format, electronically linking service providers with users, is the ultimate long-term vision for the RECs.

Although each of the RECs are in various stages of formation, their general structure is as follows:

- Each of the RECs will be composed of members chosen by the region’s legislative delegations. Business leaders will compose the majority of the RECs. Each will support an Executive Director and a \$10,000 budget for marketing and public awareness.
- Once up and running, the RECs will be charged with conducting a “gap analysis” to identify regional gaps related to economic and education development.
- Once identified, each REC will have two options for addressing the gaps: 1) address gaps with resources/strategies provided internally from REC members and within the community and/or 2) request funding from the EEDA Coordinating Council to address the gaps. For example, if a region identifies transportation to out-of-school time programs to be a gap, they may choose to contact local businesses and faith groups to offer their vehicles to transport children. In addition, they might contact the EEDA Coordinating Council to request funding for fuel.
- The Coordinating Council will then manage the RFP process to locate vendors to address the identified issues.

Recommendation

The Education Oversight Committee will increase partnerships among those who invest in South Carolina’s schools by providing information for and connections among those building community infrastructure in support of higher student achievement.